

BATTLES WITH MINIATURES

Issue 7 2001



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Viridians: Economists and Eco-Warriors



Karas the Golden

Karas the Golden, capital city of Viridia, has a long and eminent history, and humans have lived on the fertile site beyond the northern volcanic ridge since they first began clearing land to build rude mud huts. A similar civilisation grew up around Myrhin to the south. Eventually these two sites would become the central administration of rival superpowers, each ruling over an entire hemisphere of the planet. The Karas League and Myrhin Confederacy vied for the longest time to be the dominant industrial power on Viridia, occasionally even going to war with one another, but eventually the Karas League succeeded in bankrupting the Myrhin Confederacy with its space and arms races. It was a Pyrrhic victory though, for within three decades the environmental damage caused by this industrial one-upmanship caused 'The Great Melting'—a flood that covered most of the planet when Viridia's

ice caps all but disappeared due to global warming.

Viridia could easily have degenerated into savagery following the floods, had it not been for a far-sighted experiment being carried out in the jungles surrounding Karas. At the peak of the industrial era the Karas League began developing a new technology that would have a variety of applications, including colonising space and creating sealed ecosystems for carrying out field trials of biotech developments. This technology was the bio-dome, variants of which are now used all over the galaxy to colonise environments that won't sustain life. Viridian bio-domes come in many different sizes and are characterised by having clear, borosilicate canopies reinforced by boron fibre struts that form a hexagonal geodesic matrix between the glass plates. This structure is incredibly resilient, yet very, very light. When

the floodwaters began to rise, the great and the good of the Karas League created floating versions of the bio-domes and abandoned the cities for a life on the high seas. Air conditioning and weather control systems within a dome regulate the climate and plant life can be grown either hydroponically, or by more traditional methods where soil exists. Powerful computers manipulate the climate processors within the dome, creating different environments in different parts of the dome. Tropical fruits, for example, can be grown alongside temperate cereal crops. The ecosystem within the dome is known as a biome, and it is totally self-contained. As long as no pollutants or hostile, alien organisms are introduced to the biome it will exist indefinitely, allowing humans and the animals they bring with them to theoretically survive forever within a dome. Of course power is required to run such domes, and

what is more it has to be clean power. Where possible natural energy is used for this, the favourite is solar power, but wind, wave and geo-thermal are also used. As a back up, or where such power sources don't exist, the Viridians have developed the T-Cell, or Tritium Fusion Cell as it's also known. T-Cells are 'batteries that turn water into 'heavy water', by converting the hydrogen atoms into tritium by a process of nuclear fusion. This reaction releases massive amounts of cheap, clean energy. Eventually of course the floodwaters receded and the floating bio-domes touched down on land. The old city structures were still there, and the descendants of the Karas League, who had preserved science and civilisation within the domes, decided to rebuild their once great capital—all thanks to the bio-domes. Nowadays on Viridia, and in most of its colonies, these domes are used for intensive farming, where rapid-growing GM crops like rice, wheat and soya can be grown on multiple levels of the dome for a more efficient use of space.

When the bio-domes finally touched *terra firma* again Viridia was a very different world to the verdant jungle paradise that their ancestors had ruined. Apart from the high equatorial plateau, which retained its former splendour and wildlife, most of the planet had turned into stagnant, melancholy salt marshes and dingy swamps—and it rained constantly. It was clear that it would take many more centuries of natural growth before Viridia recovered from 'The Great Melting'. It was during this period that the Viridians started to take the first tentative steps towards developing that other great colonisation technology, terraforming. At this time the Viridians didn't have the technology to process the

atmosphere and alter the weather on a global scale, but they did have access to advanced biotech procedures within the labs aboard their bio-domes. Thus was born the science of probiotic terraforming, which allows a life-sustaining environment with a basic or limited ecosystem to be transformed into a thriving, diverse ecosystem by the introduction of resilient, rapidly growing GM plants. The upshot was that within twenty years, instead of many centuries, Viridia was once again the jungle planet. The abundance of new plant life had the bonus effect of stabilising the climate to pre-industrial levels.

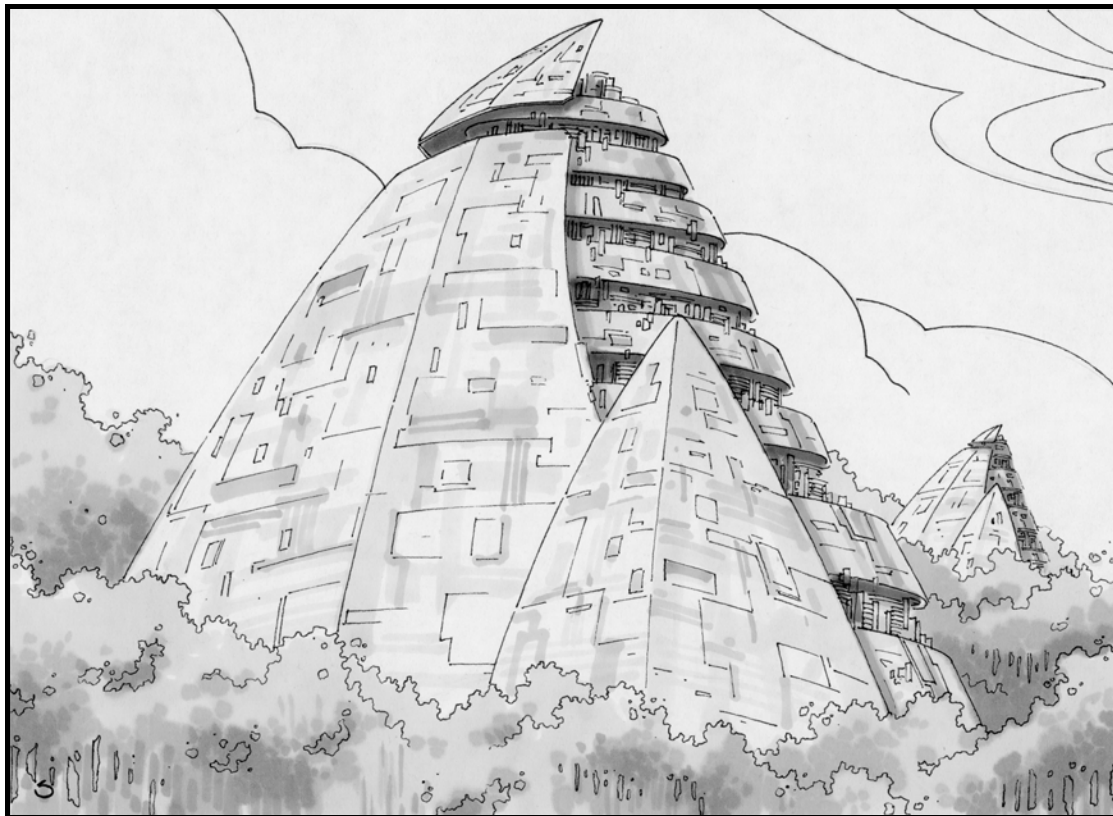
Whilst the rebuilding of the environment was going on, many of the Viridians were anxious to return to stable systems of government and trade, in order to rise above the drudgery of day-to-day survival. During the period that the planet was flooded, each bio-dome was essentially an autonomous state supporting a few hundred people in contact with other domes via radio-links. These survivors were direct descendants of Viridia's governing elite, and education aboard the domes had taught them that historically they were the inheritors of Viridia. Generations of the proletariat had survived the floods too, and one of the first jobs for the dome dwellers when the floods receded was to bring them back into the political fold, where they'd be the natural working class. At first this was difficult, but in general the dome-dwellers were healthier, better armed, and had the promise of a better life for the other survivors if they fell in line. A new government was set up at the old site of Karas the Golden, which would be rebuilt as the new capital of a global state. At first this was an absolutist oligarchy, but as more settlements were built up and trade became the mainstay of

Viridian life, the plutocratic political system ultimately replaced the old order. Nowadays the directors of the six most powerful corporations on Viridia, as determined by the leading shares of the Karas Stock Exchange, forms the Viridian Assembly, which sits in palatial apartments in Karas's Companies House.

To facilitate this trade-based system of government, particularly now that it's interplanetary, the Viridians have remained at the forefront of communications technology and transport logistics. Karas has a massive intelligence nexus called Strata, which integrates and monitors data from the stock exchanges; personal conversations, media viewing and product consumption habits; and military field transmissions. This allows the Viridian Assembly to plan its military, domestic and economic strategies across the galaxy in a holistic fashion, and any hiccups in the status quo can have a military, diplomatic or marketing response as appropriate. On the surface of Viridia a transport infrastructure of wide, shallow bayous and deep, narrow canals link Karas to other settlements. These waterways are travelled by T-Cell powered ground effect carriers; vehicles mounted on aquaplaning struts that range in size from personal transports to bulk cargo carriers, and are capable of reaching speeds of MACH 2. Air travel is by solar powered flying wings, which can transport people and cargoes over terrain impassable by the ground effect skimmers.

Karas was once called 'Golden' because it was clad in gold mined from the jungle's riverbanks and mountainous slopes, now it's called Golden because its solar panels gleam gold as they track Viridia Solaris across the sky. Some lessons at least have been learned.

Solar Cities



Karas the Golden was the first of the solar cities and provided the architectural model for rebuilding Viridia after the 'Great Melting'. Once urban life began settling down again the Viridians had to develop energy solutions based on the technology they'd used during their time on the bio-domes. Solar power was the obvious choice and they decided conical buildings would best utilise this source. Great, mobile curved sheets of a photosensitive titanium-borosilicate alloy panel about half the surface area of each of these buildings, tracking Viridia Solaris across the sky to store more than enough energy for each city's needs. As if that weren't enough hydropower and wind farms on the outskirts of the cities supplement the solar energy. The shapes of these buildings are reminiscent of certain, very ancient architecture found deep in the Viridian jungles. Ziggurats and pyramids were built by ancient civilisations to bring them closer to

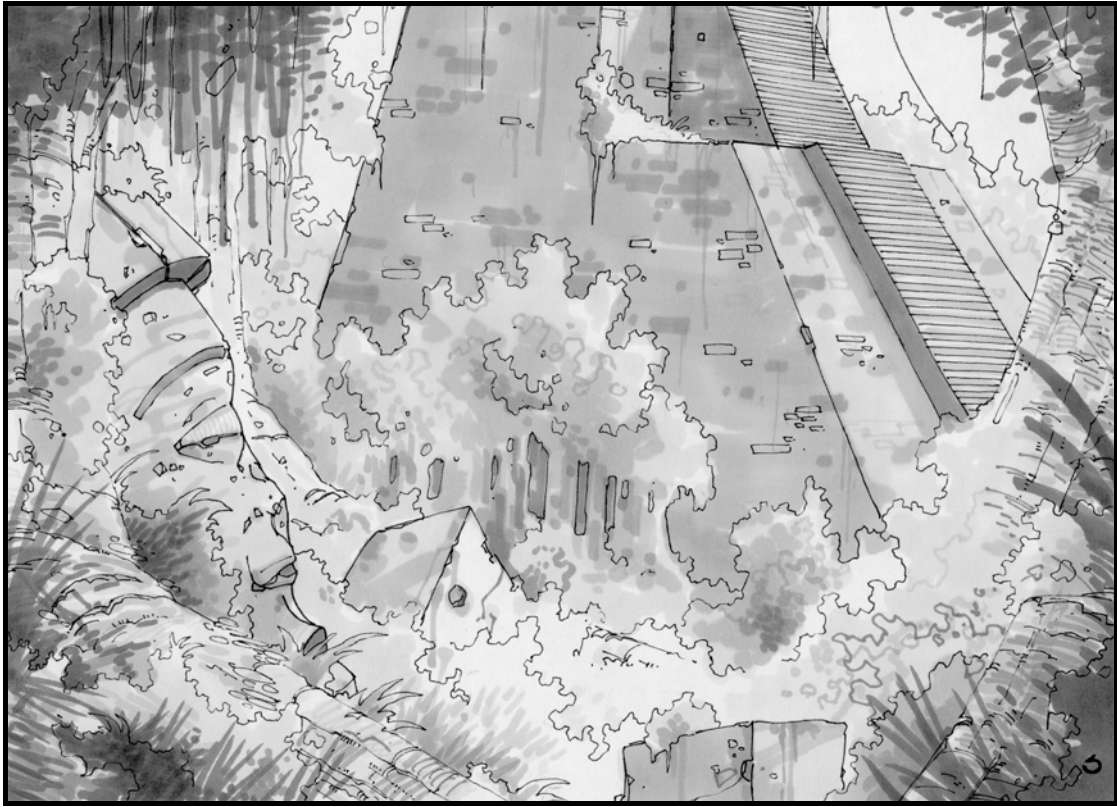
their sun, and the modern Viridians consciously echo this worship with their conical structures.

The individual buildings are massive, and a particular corporation usually owns each one. Within the building, called an archology, everything is owned and run by that corporation and all the citizens living there are employees of that corporation. The corporation provides health, leisure, security, and education...everything really. Factories, laboratories and offices are located in the archology too, or if the business of the owners is agriculture then the company provides workers with transport to the rural bio-domes.

Of course agribusiness is the mainstay of the Viridian economy, and the other Homeworlds import Viridian food as a luxury item, it being regarded as superior in quality and taste. Viridians massively overproduce food wherever they are, harvesting far

more than the populations of their settlements can possibly consume. The bulk of this goes for export, forming the base of the Viridian galactic economy, but even then massive amounts are simply trashed—recycled into fertilisers, textiles, construction materials, etc. The Viridians use a lot of biotech in their agricultural and military industries, from designing higher yield, faster growing crops to modifying saurians for different combat roles. They stop short of direct genetic engineering of humans, that being a Syntha practise abhorred by the Viridians. However, they have no qualms about engineering their food to promote their own health, creating crops that contain vaccines for human diseases, increased doses of vitamins and essential amino acids, and so forth. This makes the Viridians and anyone who can afford to consume their produce hale and healthy people.

Viridian Jungles



Viridia's landscape is arranged in three distinct bands of climate zones. At the poles of the planet there are ice caps and small, frigid oceans. In slightly wider bands to the north and south, contiguous with the polar regions, the cold gives way to temperate lowlands. By far the widest band of climate zone is the humid, sweltering rainforests that march north and south from the high, volcanic plateaux of the equator. The jungle characterises Viridia, indeed gives the planet, and by extension the whole star system its name. The climatic powerhouse of Viridia isn't located in the small, ineffectual oceans, as it is on most blue-green planets, but within this massive rainforest and the geo-thermal energy locked within the active volcanoes of the equator. Weather is generated in the cloud forests of the lower volcanic slopes where steam rising from the hot forest reaches the cool air above the canopy, setting up a convection current that sends weather systems out across the jungle.

The jungles are full of the hum of insects and the song of brightly coloured birds, as well as the scurrying, shuffling and varied tongues of the saurians. Wild mammals are curiously absent on Viridia, with the exception of some small insectivores and rodents, and seals and porpoises in the polar oceans. It was not always like this though and once there was a golden age of mammals on the green planet, with many wonderful and varied species ranging from tiny shrews to vast herbivores such as rhinos and elephants, as well as majestic and fierce predators like tigers and bears. The saurians were confined to the high and intermediate slopes of the equator during this time—relics of a bygone era, unable to compete with the infinitely more adaptable mammals. But one of these mammal species caused a catastrophe of global proportions, which wiped out most of their mammalian cousins. That mammal was of course man. In the distant

past Viridian humans underwent an industrial revolution, which saw the more 'civilised' communities give up sustainable agrarian practises to embrace large scale manufacturing and agri-business. This revolution was powered by Viridia's seemingly limitless supplies of fossil fuels, and allowed the Viridians to create yet more powerful energy sources such as nuclear power. The magnificent technological era was taking an unseen toll on Viridia though, and as greenhouse emissions from fossil fuel driven technologies, particularly transport, piled up at the same time as vast areas of the forests were being cleared for agri-business, something had to give. In the end the ice caps, which were much larger at that time, melted almost completely in the space of half a century. Sea levels rose dramatically during this period, submerging vast tracts of the central continent and turning the already alarming trend in species' decline into a mass extinction

event. All of the large, wild mammals disappeared, as did most of the domestic species. Humans during this time fared as well as their economic situation allowed, the richest and most powerful assured salvation through bio-dome technologies, whilst the rest 'sank or swam' according to their luck or resourcefulness.

It took centuries for the floods to recede, but when they did humans once again had the opportunity to develop technologies to advance the species. Though this time the descendants of those who'd caused 'The Great Melting', were determined that nothing like it should ever happen again. They had a new found, almost fanatical respect for nature, and instead of treating the natural world as a resource, the Viridians found technologies that allowed them to co-exist with the environment instead of exploiting it—and they still managed to make a profit from doing so.

Viridian jungles are no longer cut down to make way for the equivalent of what would have been cattle ranches in the past. There are no cattle anymore, but large, herbivorous saurians have been domesticated for human consumption. The natural environment of the creatures is the jungle, so farmers simply corral herds by stringing a perimeter of force wall generators between the trees. This has virtually no environmental impact, being a clean technology. Predators have no access to the animals, so no potentially damaging action need be taken against them. In concept this is similar to the deer parks owned by powerful, rich Viridians

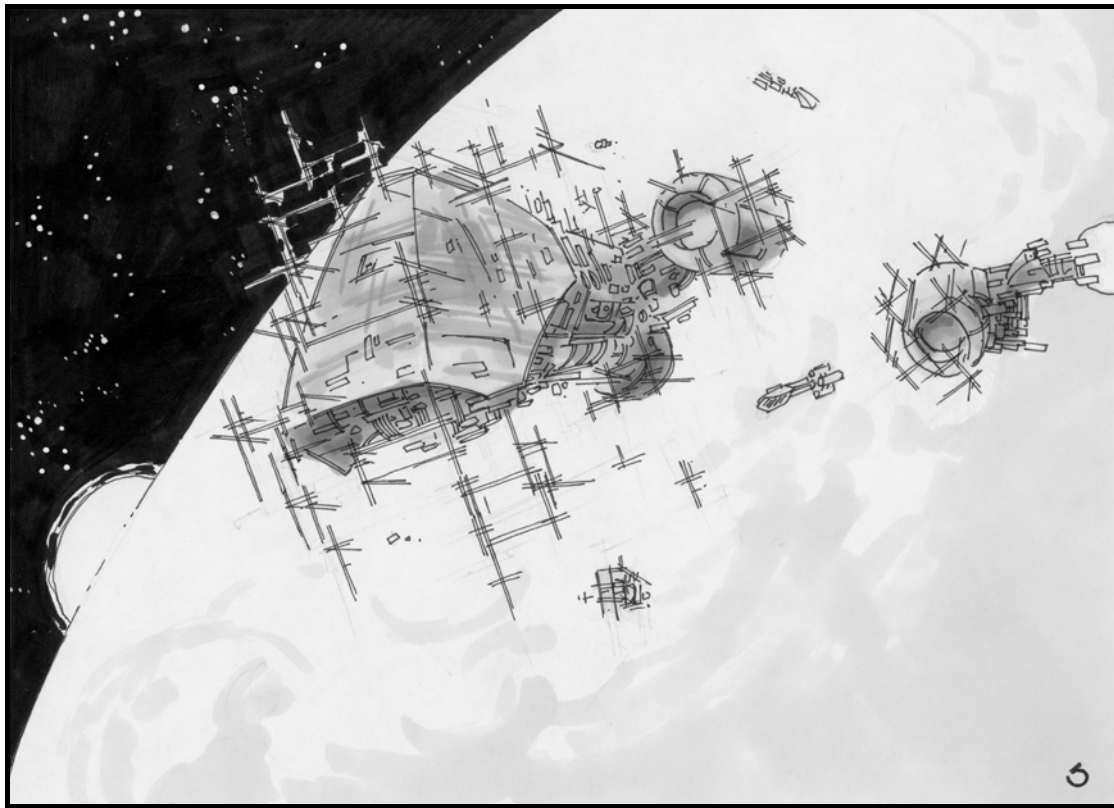
in the planet's distant past. Intensive farming takes place in the bio-domes, but the jungles play host to a secondary sustainable agribusiness called jungle harvesting, an ingenious technique involving crews of farmers entering the jungle upon the backs of massive, ponderous saurians. These creatures have great biomass processors attached to their backs and as the monsters browse, the farmers can use vacuum pumps to Hoover up fruits, nuts, leaves and even shallow roots and tubers. Soil is filtered off and ejected back on to the ground by the processors, and the produce is sorted by size into various collecting caches on the flanks of the beast. Once a full load of about four or five tonnes has been collected, the beasts return to their ranches, where the produce is sorted in warehouses and distributed to the cities and spaceports.

Of course if there were any winners that managed to prosper from 'The Great Melting', then that would be the saurians. Before the ice caps disappeared saurians only existed in remote, hidden valleys of ancient forest on the equatorial highlands. Cut off from the mammals they could live out their severely limited lives safe from competition that would overwhelm them. Then suddenly everything changed, and when the flood waters gave way and new forests sprang up in their wake, there was suddenly a whole world for the saurians to make their own—as it had once been before the coming of the mammals. Saurians come in many shapes and forms, but essentially they represent an intermediary stage between

reptiles and birds. Like reptiles they have tough, scaly skins and an outwardly reptilian appearance. Internally though they are more like birds, having large, four chambered hearts that pump warm blood and light, yet incredibly strong, honeycombed bone structures. There are many more saurians in the post-flood world because Viridians scientists have genetically engineered new forms for their own purposes. Saurians range from small, ferocious cynoraptors that have been domesticated for the roles once occupied by hunting and attack dogs, to titanic, long-necked forest canopy browsers that are the largest animals ever to walk the surface of Viridia.

Other relics that have survived against the odds on Viridia are the ancient forest peoples, who took to the hills when the floodwaters came. The advanced global Viridian culture has a very fond regard for these people, and urban Viridians are often heard uttering proclamations along the lines of: 'We can learn so much from these people.' And: 'If only we had the wisdom of the tribesmen, then 'The Great Melting' would never have happened.' The Viridian Assembly has granted them reservations around the equator in recognition of the need to preserve this ancient heritage. In return the tribes people sadly shake their heads at the urban Viridians, who still pursue industry and wealth with an obsessive passion. 'They may have cleaned up their machines,' say the tribal elders, 'but their souls remain as polluted as ever.'

Viridian Shipbuilding



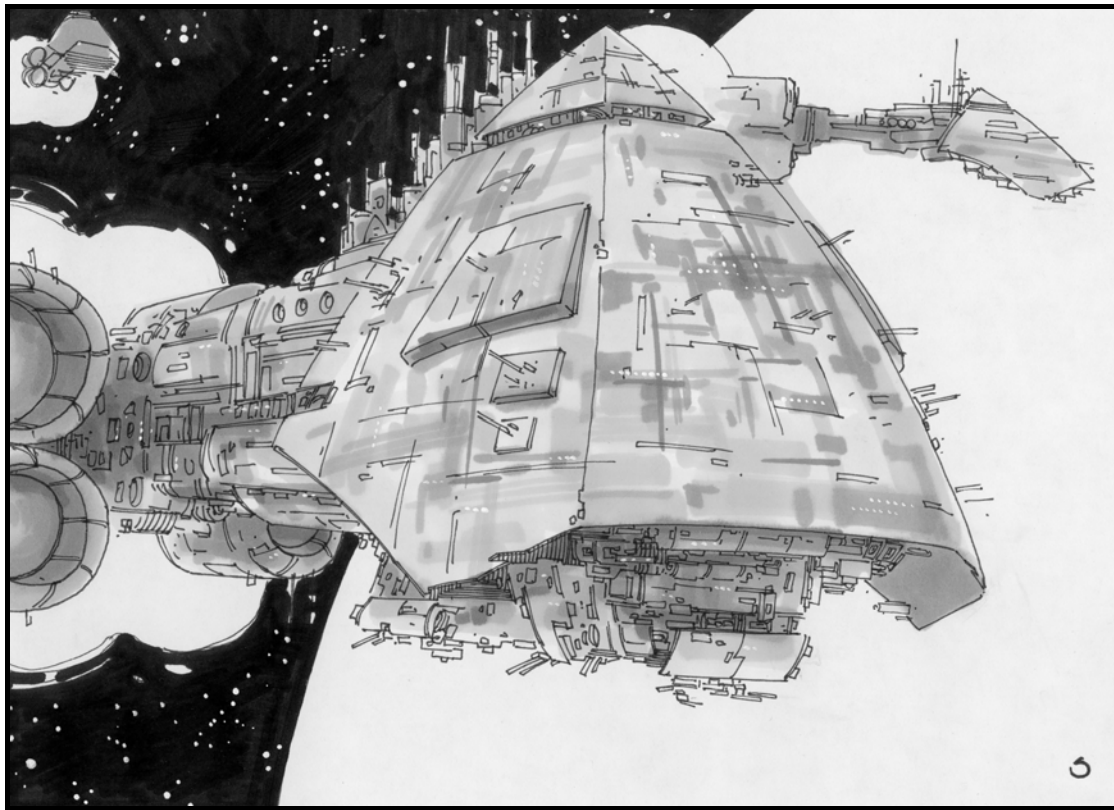
Viridia is the planet where it all started for humanity's drive to colonise the stars, and prior to 'The Great Melting' the Karas League and Myhrin Confederacy were both engaged in space exploration programs to send fossil fuel powered rockets into space. Of course such wasteful and environmentally damaging vessels as the old rockets would be unthinkable, indeed criminal, to the modern Viridians. Yes, things have moved on somewhat since those early, experimental days. Nowadays most Viridian colonies are orbited by geo-synchronous hangers and shipyards, where starships are constructed in space. These shipyards are effectively orbital archologies, just like the buildings of solar cities. And in common with the archologies many citizens are born and die aboard them without ever leaving the shipyard.

The shipyards are responsible for the construction of hulls and superstructures, and are equipped with on-site plasma furnaces where the light, super tough and heat resistant alloys that go into all Viridian ships are created and drawn into flat sheets or rods. Ships take shape in the vacuum outside the shipyard, initially attached to docking points on the yard's exterior. As the vessel grows and takes shape, its engines are attached and it is cast off from the yard, to free up space for the next job. It trails along after the shipyard, being finished off by construction crews in small transports. Delicate electrical components and sensory equipment for communications, life-support, etc is created off-site in clean environments by specialist sub-contractors. These parts are then shipped in by secure cargo vehicles and can be added once

the hull is complete. By the time this is done, the ship is more or less complete and the final touches can be added, such as furnishings, labs, weapon-systems, xasers or whatever.

Long gone are the days of fossil fuels and the engine of choice used all across the galaxy by pretty much all peoples is the plasma fusion drive, developed by the Viridians as an extension of T-Cell technology. Basically this engine is a matter to energy converter that can use anything as a fuel, making it not only a very cheap and versatile engine, but also the ultimate in recycling. Matter in the fuel chamber is heated and compressed by an EM pressuriser unit causing a nuclear fusion reaction within the fuel, converting it to plasma. As well as providing thrust, this plasma is also used to power all of the ship's major energy requirements.

The Viridian Fleet



The military fleets of Viridia, although not the largest or most powerful of the Homeworlds' (that accolade clearly going to VASA), are rightly respected by foes. Private arms and military vehicle manufacturers such as Lockstar Optics and Martin Astronautic Engineering Company compete for lucrative tenders from the Viridian Assembly to build and supply the fleets with arms, armour systems etc. Each fleet is designed to be multi-role and is built around the mighty dreadnoughts, the largest and most formidable battleships in the Viridian fleet. Flotillas of smaller ships with specialist roles such as assault, bombing, interdiction and so on accompany dreadnoughts in battle. The Viridian's excellence in the fields of communication and logistics makes these fleets highly manoeuvrable in combat, and they can be rapidly scrambled and deployed to respond to threats. The dreadnoughts themselves are multi-role vessels, all of similar size and design. They represent the

ultimate honing of a traditionally Viridian all-purpose approach to designing heavy battleships. In addition to having excellent manoeuvrability for craft of their size, they boast impressive weapons and armour systems. Standard armaments include Lockstar 50 gigawatt turbo lasers and Viridian Amalgamated Magnetics heavy gauss cannons. The turbo lasers are primary weapons that fire a white-hot continuous photon beam capable of lancing through most armour systems, and are used to engage orbital fortifications and other battleships at long range. These weapons are too cumbersome to use up close or against manoeuvrable, light craft, so the dreadnoughts bristle with heavy gauss cannon pods, rapid firing quad rails guns operated by a single gunner. The dreadnoughts are also the main troop carriers of the Viridian fleet and each one is equipped with a grav-drive and can carry a full company of marines, complete with saurian

support teams. Shielding is heaviest towards the front of the dreadnoughts and they rely on keeping their snout towards the enemy. This is to protect the plasma fusion drives located way back on extended stern sections. This is because damage to the drive can result in a core explosion within the engines capable of destroying the whole ship.

Dreadnoughts tend to be named after predatory mammals, creatures that have passed in Viridian legend, such as the Adamantine Bear and the Red Tiger and they can acquire great renown amongst the Viridians who love their heroics. Examples of famous battle exploits include the Sabretooth single-handedly fighting off four Koralon reef ships; the Blue Starwolf, which held off a fleet of Junker pirates until reinforcements arrived; and the Jaguar, which ran a Synthia blockade to relieve Viridian freedom fighters on Kulthus 9.

Viridian Armed Forces



Viridians are famous for their all-purpose approach to warfare and historically their marine units have provided the model for the basic rifleman all across the galaxy. However, in common with other armies, this all-rounder is capable of specialisation as his or her career advances. For Viridians the terrain of the Homeworld and the manner in which they terraform has informed the training and tactics of specialist units, and the emphasis is very much on jungle warfare and survival. In basic training all Viridian marines undergo a fortnight of intensive jungle survival and combat training. This is the most gruelling and dangerous part of basic training, but a significant number of those marines that pass muster will go on to take further jungle training and join a jungle commando squad. These troops are similar to the standard marines, but are extremely well

trained and equipped for jungle warfare.

The largest permanent units within the Viridian army are its regiments. A regiment is commanded by a colonel and comprises several companies. Each company consists of somewhere between five hundred and a thousand troops and for the most part is made up of all-round squads. These squads; also called platoons by the Viridians, are generally a combination of basic and jungle commando squads along with their support. Standard companies also contain a broad mix of saurian units, and elite squads such as assault marines and interdict marines. There are also companies formed with an emphasis on dealing with particular situations, such as aerial assault companies containing drop troopers and marines mounted on pteraraptors, or heavy companies containing additional support

weapon teams and saurian artillery.

Each company from the regiment will take tours of duty around the galaxy, reinforcing Viridian security where necessary, and if it is their lot entering theatres of war. A tour of duty can last anywhere from three months to two years, usually determined by how gruelling and psychologically taxing the tour is likely to be. The Viridians are very sensitive about the welfare of their troops, and take issues like battle fatigue and shell shock seriously. They are eager to ensure soldiers aren't overexposed to the horrors of war, so the tour of duty system is designed to alleviate such stresses. When a major military response is required, the Viridians form battalions to deal with it based on intelligence regarding the situation, and whichever companies are available at the time. A battalion is a body of troops made up of any number of companies, which thanks to

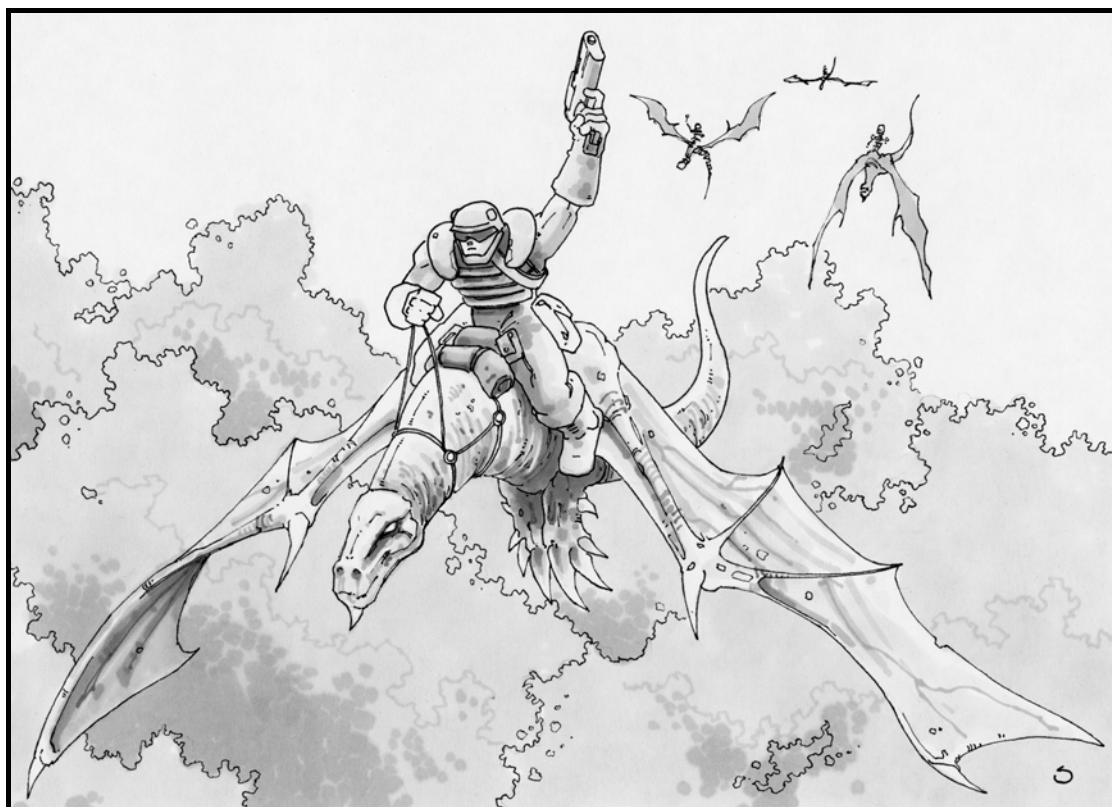
Viridian logistics and communications can be assembled with astonishing rapidity. Dreadnoughts and transport cruisers will quickly get companies to the war zone. There a general or similar high-ranking officer will be assigned a mission by Viridian High Command, and will be responsible for drawing companies up into battalions and assigning tasks to them. The Viridians have an unusual approach to mobile support, which comes in the form of its saurian units. The Viridians adopted saurians for a variety of uses in the days when Viridia was being rebuilt, as a totally environmentally friendly alternative to vehicles. Viridian genetic engineers were encouraged to experiment, and the relatively small number of saurian species from the equatorial ridge received an evolutionary jolt, multiplying in forms in the space of a few

generations. Saurians have proven very useful to the military and the Viridians rely heavily on saurian support, particularly for jungle warfare. The jungle is the natural environment for saurians, and they can move through it faster and more efficiently than any vehicle. Of course the saurians have to be fed and maintained just as vehicles need to be refuelled and maintained. And whereas a standard mobile infantry unit would require some of the troops to have basic engineering and driving skills, for the Viridians this means veterinary and beast handling skills. Common saurian units include the Scouts, highly mobile units consisting of single marines mounted on agile Struthiosauruses. There is also the Pteraraptors, large, winged predators that glide on the thermals above humid rain forests—these creatures have been trained to carry a single marine and make excellent recon units for

armies advancing through dense terrain. Behemoth assault tanks are massive monsters used as mobile battle platforms to deploy a variety of heavy ordnance, such as the howitzer barrage cannon, in support of infantry units. The all-round saurian units are Terrasaur light tanks. Each about the size of a rhino (an extinct Viridian mammal), they can have an armoured platform on their backs, containing one or two marines and weaponry ranging from small arms to turret mounted gauss cannons, or simply a couple of marines sitting astride. An approaching Viridian army with full saurian support makes for an awesome sensory onslaught. The ground trembles with the massive footfalls of Behemoths, the air is split by the piercing shrieks of Pteraraptors, and the sight of charging Struthiosauruses and Terrasaurs is primeval and terrifying.



Jungle Rendezvous



A small strike team from the 11th Fighting Tigers Jungle Assault Company was recently dropped on Liana 3 at the request of VASA authorities in the sector. They were to rendezvous at a designated base with Black Legionaries and Archangels and participate in a mission, details of which would be explained at the rendezvous point. Pteraraptor Sergeant Miguel Domingo had an illegal, encrypted one-way data feed through Strata in order to keep an uncensored journal. He apparently wanted his family to know if anything happened to him. Here are extracts of his account...

Day 1

Well, they dropped us off on Liana 3 this morning, then took off again. That was the last we'd see of the VSS *Capacocha*. Next time we dusted off it would be with the VASA fleet, and in between now and then we had a three day slog through heavy jungle to get to the rendezvous point. Then we'll have to do whatever mission those

VASA spooks have in mind for us. I hate these grey ops.

Liana 3 has no areas of different terrain, just endless clicks of nasty, humid swamp and virgin rain forest. It was only recently discovered in a system hidden by a magnetic anomaly, so the colonists haven't moved in yet. I've gotta say though, I have a bad feeling about this one. I don't like the *feel* of this place, and the saurians don't seem too thrilled to be here either.

Day 2

We spotted smoke coming out of the jungle when we went up on the Pteraraptors this morning. The Cap sent us forward to recce it, and sure enough the snafu principle was kicking in already. The VASA camp had been trashed. Whoever's ass we'd came here to kick had decided to get their boot in first. We were ordered back without going down, in case there were still hostiles in the area. It'd be tomorrow before the ground element could reach the VASA

camp, but that was the plan anyway. I've noticed something now that has been bugging me for a while. There's no big animal noises in this jungle—plenty of insects, but no birds, mammals, reptiles and whatever. There's supposed to be an advanced ecosystem here, with all of those sorts of things present. That's always a bad sign.

Day 3

The VASA outpost pod was in pretty bad shape when we got there this afternoon. There was evidence of a firefight; ion burns, flechette holes and so on. The interior was gutted and still smouldering, but there was no sign of bodies—neither VASA troops nor hostiles. Maybe they were still alive somewhere. We decided to camp here for the night (I know it sounds crazy, but hey, we're the Fighting Tigers) and give the surrounding area a thorough search, before we called it a day and arranged a dust off. Cap sent three point platoons into the

jungle to secure the area. Not one returned. When the screaming started we were sent up on the Pteraraptors, but it was over by the time we got airborne. And like the VASA compound, not a sign of bodies anywhere. We returned to camp and set up a perimeter of mines and alarms, and we settled in for the night.

Day 4

If we thought things were bad before, then today set us straight on that score. As we were breaking camp in the morning a figure came crashing over the perimeter, setting off the alarms that hadn't yet been deactivated. Then she collapsed against the base of a tree. It was an Archangel Lieutenant. Everybody crowded around her to try and help, and she suddenly came to and started waving a blaster around. Everybody backed off pretty rapidly. Her armour was cracked from under her arm, and diagonally across her stomach to her hip, and it seemed to be encrusted in something that looked like reddish, ground up glass.

The Cap asked her what had happened, and if there was anything we could do to help her. Well, she immediately pulled rank despite being injured, and ordered him to send a transmission to Int-Sec on her personal authorisation. 'Tell them Liana 3 is code alpha-omega,' she said.

'What was that all about?' Cap asks, putting aside his jaw comm.

'Liana 3 is now subject to special quarantine measures, there's a fleet being scrambled now to come and eradicate all life on the planet.'

It's fair to say that the Cap and a few others lost it at this point. Maybe it was a premonition about what she'd say next.

'So what about our dust off?' asks Cap when he'd calmed down and stopped cussing.

Everybody crowded in on her to hear this. She started laughing. It turned into a cough though, and she brought up blood. It spilled over her jaw, and seemed to *crystallise* on contact with the air. Now we knew what was encrusted around her cracked armour. Everybody drew back again.

'Don't you understand?' she said. 'There will be no dust off. The whole planet is infested. It's in the ecosystem now. It may even be in some of you. It's in me. Make your peace with whatever gods you may have, and do your duties by humanity. Look, it's easy.'

Then she blew her brains out right in front of us. I knew I had a bad feeling about this mission.

It turned out the Archangel had a holodisc recording of the mission brief on her. The Cap inserted it into the sim slot on his helmet and pulled down his visor. He set the sim to broadcast and half of us activated our data viewing visors while the other half kept watch, then the rest took a look at it. It turns out that the mission was to seek and destroy a sect of Koralon

worshipping mutants, who'd taken off for Liana 3 about six months ago—apparently they were the ones that discovered the system. The rest of us only know about it because VASA had been keeping tabs on them. According to intelligence they had a compound in the zone we were in now.

Day 5

Spirits are pretty low around here. Lost another point platoon with no signs left, we're down to six platoons now. More significantly though, we lost the Pteraraptors from Recon Squadron 3. Our Pteraraptors roost in squadron groups, hanging upside down from the higher tree branches. Something came down through the treetops during the night and took them out. All that was left were their skins, hanging over the branches like soggy paper. Nobody heard a thing, and whatever's out there is getting bolder. It's intelligent too, because it avoided the defence perimeter by going over the top.

We've spent the day trying to find the mutants' compound; after all they must have had transport to get on and off the planet. I don't think we can last much longer in this place. Time's running out anyway, with that eradication fleet on its way. If the jungle doesn't kill us then it sure as hell will. Maybe something will turn up tomorrow.

And that is the last entry Sergeant Domingo made in his journal.

New Viridian Troop Types

Viridian Commandos

Although the planets and stellar bodies colonised by Viridia run the whole gamut of climates, they tend to favour lush, fertile worlds rich in nutrients and teeming with life.

Consequently the Viridian Military Industrial Complex maintains units of Commandos, veteran Marines at home in the verdant jungles and rainforests of these worlds.

These soldiers are at home in such dense terrain as such they favour chainguns and flamethrowers as close support weapons.

Commando

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
4	4	4	4	1	5	2	4

Structure

Squad

Minimum Unit Size: 4

Maximum Unit Size: 12

You may include a maximum of 1 Support model for every 3 other models

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Commando	Gauss Rifle, Combat Blade	4-12	18
Chain Gunner	Chain Gun Combat Blade	0-3	21
Flame Thrower	Flame Thrower Combat Blade	0-2	33
Sergeant	Gauss Rifle, Combat Blade	0-1	20

Special Rules

All: Rough Terrain Specialist: Jungle / Forest, Infiltrate

Sergeant: Tactical Awareness, High Morale (+1)

You may chose to equip all members of a Viridian Commando unit with Assault Grenades at a cost of 4 points per model. You must equip either all of a unit, or none.

Fenrir's Assault Marines

Few units within the armies of Viridia have achieved such renown as Fenrir's Assault Marines.

Originally hailing from one of the hill tribes of northern Viridia, their chief, Fenrir, overcame their distrust of the Viridian government and they joined their planet's armed forces.

They are fierce and savage warriors, and are rightly feared and respected wherever they see combat.

Fenrir's Assault Marines

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
5	5	5	5	1	5	2	4

Structure

Squad

Minimum Unit Size: 4

Maximum Unit Size: 12

You may include a maximum of 1 Support model for every 3 other models

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Fenrir's Assault Marine	Gauss Rifle	4-12	22
Flame Thrower	Flame Thrower, Combat Blade	0-2	36(s)
Great Axe	Great Axe, Gauss Rifle	0-3	26(s)
Sergeant	Gauss Rifle	0-1	24(s)

Special Rules

All: Berserk Charge, High Morale (+1)

Sergeant: Tactical Awareness, High Morale (+2)

Fenrir "The Ice Duke"

Never are the savage warriors of Fenrir's Assault Marines more devastating than when accompanied by their grizzled leader.

He strides into battle wrapped in a cloak made from the hide of one of the fierce polar bears of Viridia, which can grow up to 4 meters tall.

Legend has it that he killed such a bear with nothing but his bare hands, and he wears its hide as a heavy cloak not only as protection, but also as a reminder to his enemies of his martial prowess.

Fenrir "The Ice Duke"

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
6	5	5	6	2	6	2	4

Structure

Individual

Minimum Unit Size: 0

Maximum Unit Size: 1

You may add Fenrir to a unit of Fenrir's Assault Marines using the same buying criteria as Sergeants.

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Fenrir	Gauss Rifle, Loga	0-1	40

Special Rules

Berserk Charge, High Morale (+2), Tactical Awareness

Terrasaur

Viridian armies rely heavily upon various reptilian creatures, including the herbivorous beasts ridden by Scouts, and of course the infamous Behemoth.

Terrasaur are omnivorous creatures, distantly related to the Behemoth, which are used by Viridia as a form of modern shock cavalry. Needing no fuel save what they find and eat themselves, they are capable of surviving for long periods of time behind enemy lines, or without logistical support.

Usually two Viridians ride astride these beasts, but they are supported by Terrasaur mounting the SHG-3700 Recoilless Cannon, a design based on the larger Howitzer Cannon mounted on Behemoths.

Terrasaur

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
4	4	4	6	2	4	4	5

Structure

Squad

Minimum Unit Size: 2

Maximum Unit Size: 8

You may include a maximum of 1 Support model for every 3 other models

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Terrasaur	Gauss Rifle, Combat Blade	2-8	36
Support Terrasaur	Recoilless Cannon Combat Blade	0-2	46
Sergeant	Gauss Rifle, Combat Blade	0-1	39

Special Rules

Terrasaur: Multiple Shots (x2), Multiple Attacks (x2)

Support Terrasaur: Tactical Awareness

Sergeant: Multiple Shots (x2), Multiple Attacks (x2), Tactical Awareness, High Morale (+1)

In close combat the beast also gets an attack of its own, resolved separately, To Hit +0, Dam 5 (x2). Terrasaur cannot evade.

Pteraraptor

Pteraraptors are light, flying reptiles native to the high equatorial mountains of Viridia.

Their self-sufficiency makes them significantly cheaper to maintain than Grav-technology, and as such the Viridian Assembly favours them over more costly vehicles.

Their speed and ability to fly over obstacles makes them much valued as recon units by Commanders across the galaxy.

Pteraraptor

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
4	4	4	5	1	5	4	9

Structure

Squad

Minimum Unit Size: 3

Maximum Unit Size: 8

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Pteraraptor	Gauss Rifle, Autopistol	3-8	46
Sergeant	Gauss Rifle, Autopistol	0-1	50

Special Rules

Sergeant: Tactical Awareness, High Morale (+1)

As Pteraraptors can fly, they receive no penalties for moving over rough ground, and may ignore obstacles up to 9" high.

In close combat the beast also gets an attack of its own, resolved separately, To Hit +0, Dam 5 (x2). Pteraraptors cannot evade

Raptor Packs

Viridia's lush jungles and forests are teeming with life, most of it reptilian, and the Viridian Assembly encourages the armed forces to exploit this natural resource.

Raptors are small, bipedal creatures that make up with ferocity what they lack in individualism.

They are herded into battle by specially trained handlers, generally amongst the fittest members of a Viridian task force, forced, as they are to try and keep pace with their slaving pack.

Raptors

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
3	3	4	3	1	3	1	6

Handler

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
4	4	4	4	1	5	2	4

Structure

Squad

Minimum Unit Size: 4

Maximum Unit Size: 10

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Handler	Gauss Rifle, Autopistol	1	18
Raptor	Natural Weapons*	3-9	11

Special Rules

Handler: Fast

Raptors: Swarm

*Raptors attack in close combat using the weapons with which nature gifted them – teeth and claws. Use the profile of a combat blade (To Hit +0, Dam ST +0).

Sergeant Kurt Kwinsky

A veteran of wars all across the galaxy, Kurt Kwinsky is one of the longest serving non-commissioned officers within the Viridian armed forces.

His calm under fire, and popularity within the ranks is surely what has kept this gruff, outspoken Sergeant from being court-martialled, although as time goes on it becomes increasingly unlikely that he will ever be offered a place at one of the Assembly's Officer Training Academies.

Sergeant Kurt Kwinsky

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
4	4	4	4	1	5	2	4

Structure

Individual

Minimum Unit Size: 0

Maximum Unit Size: 1

You may add Kurt Kwinsky to a unit of Viridian Commandos using the same buying criteria as Sergeants. If you do so, you may NOT include another Sergeant (although you may include other characters as normal).

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Sgt Kurt Kwinsky	Gauss Rifle, Autopistol, Combat Blade, Assault Grenades	1	26

Special Rules

Tactical Awareness, High Morale (+2)

Lieutenant Johnny "G"

The Maverick young officer known to his troops as Johnny "G" is fast becoming a legend in his own time.

He has a reputation for breaking the rules, and disrespecting his superior officers, but fortunately for him he is also known for getting the job done, against the odds.

Lieutenant Johnny "G"

AS	SH	ST	T	W	CD	SZ	MV
5	5	4	4	2	6	2	4

Structure

Individual

Minimum Unit Size: 0

Maximum Unit Size: 1

You may add Johnny "G" to a unit of Viridian Commandos using the same buying criteria as Sergeants.

Troop Type	Equipment	No. per Unit	Cost
Lt. Johnny "G"	Autoshotgun, Autopistol, Assault Grenades, Combat Blade	1	36

Special Rules

Tactical Awareness, High Morale (+2), Fearless, Immune to Panic, Inspiring

New Special Rules

Infiltrate

A unit skilled in infiltration knows how to use natural terrain to their best advantage, sneaking up close to enemy lines without being detected.

An army that includes a unit with the Infiltration special ability which has deployed either within a piece of terrain, or behind an obstacle (i.e. the obstacle is between them and their opponents) may automatically win the Initiative in the first turn of the game, providing the first unit activated is an infiltrating unit.

If both sides have Infiltrators, roll for Initiative as normal.

New Weaponry

Assault Grenades

Assault grenades are lighter, low yield hand grenades used by jungle fighters, such as Viridian Commandos.

Their small blast area makes them virtually useless at range, but when thrown whilst charging they can be effective.

CC	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam
-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-

Type

One Handed

Special Rules

If a unit with Assault Grenades makes a charge move, after you have moved the chargers and closed with the enemy, each commando makes one roll to wound, DAM 3, against an enemy model. You may make a maximum of one roll per commando, and no single enemy model may be hit more than once. Remove casualties, and then continue with the assault. Models killed by Assault Grenades do count when determining who won the combat.

You may only use Assault Grenades when you charge, not when you close or counter charge.

Great Axe

To most Viridians, the great axe is a relic of their distant past, but to the members of the Hill Tribes, it is still the "cutting edge" of technology.

In close combat it can be wielded effectively by a skilled warrior, and should not be underestimated.

CC	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam
+1/ST +2	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-

Type

2 Handed, Melee, Armour Piercing 2

Special Rules

None

Loga

Loga, meaning flame in the archaic language of the Viridian steppes, is the name of Fenrir's customised Great Axe.

Originally it was a normal Great Axe, as used by the other members of his tribe, but since joining the Viridian army, Fenrir has been quick to take advantage of the new technologies made available to him.

Power generators within the haft power these modifications, including Vibro-blade technology, and an ionised edge that makes the blade shine and burn like a cold flame.

CC	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam
+1/ST +2 (x2)	-/-	-/-	-/-	-/-

Type

2 Handed, Melee, Armour Piercing 2, Incendiary

Special Rules

None

Recoilless Cannon

The SHG-3700 Recoilless Cannon, manufactured by Karan Amalgamated Industries, is a smaller, lighter version of the Howitzer Cannon featured on the Behemoth Assault Tank.

CC	Short	Medium	Long	Extreme
To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam	To Hit/Dam
-/-	-1/5 (x2)	0/5 (x2)	-1/5 (x2)	-2/5 (x2)

Type

Mounted

Special Rules

Use the small circular template